



STATE OF ILLINOIS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**Illinois River Coordinating Council
Mississippi River Coordinating Council
Wabash and Ohio Rivers Coordinating Council
Quarterly Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 19, 2010
Department of Natural Resources, Lakeview Rooms
Springfield, Illinois
1:30 PM**

MINUTES

Call to Order and Roll Call

Director Marc Miller, Department of Natural Resources, called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM, and welcomed members and guests. Olivia Dorothy, Department of Natural Resources, called the roll.

Citizen Members

Illinois River Coordinating Council (IRCC)

Doug Blodgett, The Nature Conservancy; Lee Bunting, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts; Margaret Frisbie, Friends of the Chicago River; Reggie Greenwood, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association; Daphne Mitchell; and Richard Worthen.

Illinois and Mississippi River Coordinating Councils

Wendell Shauman, Illinois Farm Bureau.

Mississippi River Coordinating Council (MRCC)

George Andres, Kaskaskia Regional Port District; Rick Baker, Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce; Tim Dimke, Rockford Park District; Rickard Nowack; Pam Peter, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts; and Anne Walker.

Wabash and Ohio Rivers Coordinating Council (WORCC)

Thomas Anderson, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts; Clark Bullard; Keith Hocking, Illinois Farm Bureau; Carl Reisman; and Greg Sherwood, Embarras River Management Association.

State Agency Members

Director Marc Miller, Department of Natural Resources; Charles Perino, Department of Transportation; Jared Thornley, Department of Agriculture; Terry Weldin-Frisch, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity; and Marcia Willhite, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

Ex-Officio Members

Lee Albright, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois River Refuge; Bill Gradle, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Donald King, USDA Farm Service Agency; Bill Kruidenier, Matt Lechner, US Forest Service, Hidden Springs; University of Illinois; Gary Meden, US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District; Rick Nelson, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Rock Island; Hurston 'Allen' Nicholas, Shawnee National Forest; Beth Pitrolo, US Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District; Colonel Vincent Quarles, US Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District; Christine Urban, US Environmental Protection Agency; and Doug Yeskis, US Geological Survey.

Approval of Minutes

Worthen moved to approve IRCC minutes from February 17, 2010 meeting in Bourbonnais. Frisbie seconded. Minutes approved with no corrections unanimously.

Peter moved to approve MRCC minutes from March 24, 2010 meeting in Hampton. Andres seconded. Minutes approved with no corrections unanimously.

Chairman's Remarks

Director Miller welcomed newly appointed members of the WORCC and acknowledged Greg Sherwood's efforts in establishing WORCC.

Member Comment Period

Director Miller updated everyone on items from previous meetings.

- At the last MRCC meeting, the possibility of merging the Council with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission was discussed. Legislation amending the MRCC Act is being drafted. The MRCC will be able to preview it at the next meeting.
- At the last IRCC Meeting, there was a motioned to send a letter to the congressional delegation requesting additional funding for the WRDA, Section 519 projects. This letter was mailed February 24 and is available for review.
- In August, Governor Quinn will announce the expansion of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to include the Kaskaskia watershed. The Governor included \$45 million in capital bill for this effort. CREP can be expanded to other watersheds such as Embarras, Vermilion and Cache if the Councils begin to prepare the necessary information for the US Department of Agriculture.

Director Miller announced that Bob Frazee, UI Extension, has resigned from the Illinois River Team as he retires.

Urban provided USEPA Region 5 "Clean Water Act Programs: Watershed Progress Update" report for Councils to review.

Frisbie commented that Chicago River Day was a success with 4,000 volunteers at 65 locations cleaning Chicago River and Calumet. She also thanked the Council for being included in discussions on Asian Carp.

Blodgett commented that The Nature Conservancy and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Great Rivers Partnership is engaging stakeholders along Mississippi River to develop a vision and manage the system as a whole. He invited the Councils to America's Innercoast Summit in St. Louis, June 22 - 24.

Comprehensive Plan for the Upper Mississippi River Valley – Gary Meden, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District

Section 459 of Water Resources Development Act of 1999 authorized development of a plan to address water resource and related land resource problems and opportunities in the upper Mississippi and Illinois River Basins, from Cairo to the headwaters of the Mississippi River, in the interest of systemic flood damage reduction. The Comprehensive Plan provides a possible framework to go forward with flood risk reduction by interested Federal, State, and local interests.

Due to the large study area, and in consideration of fiscal and time constraints, it was determined that the scope would be limited to the Mississippi and Illinois River floodplains. Although inflows from tributaries were included in flood frequency analyses, no tributaries outside the Illinois River were studied or analyzed.

The Comprehensive Plan looked at flood frequencies from the 50% level (2-year flood) to the .2% level (500-year flood), analyzing 14 alternatives with eight plans being evaluated in detail ranging from floodplain buyouts, non-structural plans, to structural alternative plans including various increases in the level of protection. Using the Risk Informed Decision Framework, three plans emerged as the high-scoring alternatives: Plans H, D, and M. All had Benefit Cost Ratios well below 1, which did not allow the Corps of Engineers to recommend any of the plans.

The governors of Missouri, Illinois and Iowa all endorsed Plan M, and the Mississippi River Commission (MRC) endorsed Plan H. Both of these plans call for 500-year level of protection along much of the Mississippi Mainstem south of Muscatine, Iowa and along much of the Illinois River south of Peoria.

The following actions are recommended (and endorsed by the MRC): Additional/more durable river gages, analysis of the tributaries, feasibility study to address reconstruction needs of the aging infrastructure, and feasibility study of critical transportation needs (primarily bridge approaches that are impacted by floods).

With the current level of funding (\$269,000 in FY2010), USACE is only able to start determining which parts of the recommendations are the highest priority. The Iowa Cedar Basin is the first priority for tributary studies. There are several likely candidates for further study on reconstruction and infrastructure studies. The USACE, with US Geological Survey, has already added gages in several locations.

USACE has been allocated \$3.5 million in FY11 to move forward with a balanced progression in all three areas including a tributary study of the Iowa Cedar Basin, reconstruction study of existing flood protection systems and evaluating critical transportation infrastructure. USACE is working with state agencies and non-governmental organizations to ensure the best use of the river floodplain and associated land resources.

Worthen asked how many gages were on the rivers previously and how many were added. Meden will provide that information at the next IRCC meeting.

Walker commented that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) re-mapping in East St. Louis will result in higher flood insurance rates because the levees no longer protect to required levels. FEMA has delayed publishing the maps until an agreement with the city is reached.

Paul Osman, DNR, added that Illinois is top in the nation for floodplain management. Illinois is in the process of converting floodplain maps to a digital GIS format. DNR is asking levee owners to provide certification that their levee still meets the standards to which they were built. DNR is responsible for administering the Floodplain Insurance Program and DNR contracted with FEMA to complete the mapping. Monroe, St. Claire and Madison Counties were mapped by FEMA contractors prior to DNR's involvement.

Mitchell commented that LaSalle County does not have levees but floodplain maps were changed. Osman responded that in the flood elevation has increased so it is not protected to 100 year flood level.

Doug Riel, Rock River Valley Association, commented that Rock Island County is destroying wetlands by filling in the floodplains. Policy should require mitigation.

Green Infrastructure – Sustainable Infrastructure – Eric Heineman, Office of the Governor

Green infrastructure is hard to define and it means something different in every context. Successful sustainable cities focus on pollution reduction, increased stormwater control, open space, enhanced aesthetics, transportation and recycling and composting programs. Objectives for green infrastructure are improved water quality, urban wildlife habitat through greenways and fostering environmental education.

Rain gardens and rain barrels are the best examples of green infrastructure. They are inexpensive, reduce harmful water quality impacts from rainfall and keep pollutants out of streams and waterways.

Schools, universities and municipalities are using green infrastructure. Cities are creating incentives to promote implementation of green infrastructure such as rebates for rain barrels. The City of Chicago has the Green Alley Program and the Green Roof Grants. PA 96-0026 makes it easier for business and homeowners to use green water systems. Other sustainable activities that individuals can do at home include growing their own food and rain barrel water can be used for watering gardens and washing cars. A new garden at the Governor's Mansion will decrease its eco footprint. Visit green.illinois.gov for more ideas.

Mitchell asked if there are any initiatives similar to ones for schools targeted at hospitals, the biggest producers of waste and users of energy. Heineman responded that all new publicly funded construction projects in the capital bill must be LEED silver or gold certified. Hospitals have biohazard waste, making it difficult to implement new waste management practices. Mitchell responded that there is a tremendous amount of clean materials that can be recycled but this is very difficult to coordinate in the difference cities.

Willhite commented that IEPA is developing a plan to promote green infrastructure use in the state through its programs. IEPA funds various infrastructure improvements and works with communities that are required to put together stormwater management plans. A study funded by UI Chicago on cost effectiveness, types of practices and benefits should be available by the end of the month. EPA will be promoting it through a \$5 million Green Infrastructure Grant program directed toward communities, neighborhoods and nonprofits.

Walker asked how sewage bills are impacted by rain barrels and gardens. Heineman responded that green infrastructure helps manage stormwater where communities have combined sanitary and stormwater systems that can overwhelm their treatment facilities during large storm events. Green infrastructure will reduce needs for capacity upgrades at wastewater treatment plants, minimizing costs for communities.

Long Term Recovery Council Flood Recovery Strategy – Dr. Richard Warner, University of Illinois, Office of Sustainability

The Long Term Recovery Council was established after the June 2008 flooding to help develop a framework for future state disaster recovery efforts. The final report was commissioned by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity under contract with the UI Urbana-Champaign, Office of Sustainability, with funding provided by the Economic Development Administration, US Department of Commerce. The Long Term Recovery Council Study Group presented the final report and their findings to the Governor's Office and State agencies on April 19, 2010. The report is available online at UI Office of Sustainability at <http://sustainability.illinois.edu/LTRC.html>.

Implementing the Clean Water Act on Border Rivers, Regional River Organizations – Marcia Willhite, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

IEPA participates in two interstate associations that coordinate federal Clean Water Act activities on great rivers forming the borders between states. The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) was formed in 1948 by interstate compact between eight states to improve and protect water quality of the Ohio River from industrial and municipal water pollution. ORSANCO has authority to set and enforce water quality standards for the Ohio River and conducts monitoring and assessment of the Ohio on behalf of member states. The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA) was formed in 1981 by joint resolution of the Governors of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin for the purpose of coordinating resource management activities on the Mississippi River. Among other tasks, UMRBA provides a forum for information sharing and joint planning among the five state water quality programs.

Riel asked if the state plans to pass legislation to recover lost authority of certain waters. Willhite responded that isolated wetlands are the main water body lost through Supreme Court decisions. The IEPA has been involved in discussions to protect isolated wetlands in Illinois.

River Edge Development Project – Elmo Dowd, Associate Director, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

The River Edge Redevelopment Zones Act, signed into law four years ago, created three pilot communities to redevelop riverfront brownfields and industrial sites. The Zones are similar to enterprise zones and are managed by a partnership between DCEO and IEPA. The Act recognizes the need for mechanisms to encourage private development, job creation and reuse of existing infrastructure and creates tax incentives and special funding for communities within the zones. It creates a special tax allocation that gives benefits from IEPA with remediation tax credits of 25% for that zone.

The cities identified in the initial Act are Rockford, Aurora and East St. Louis. The legislation was amended to create a zone in Elgin. Aurora is implementing this program most aggressively. They are building a parkway and working with private developers to build condos and redevelop commercial

properties. East St Louis is seeing is some growth within their zone and the city of Rockford will host a company that builds solar panels.

The Act allocates \$2 million in special grant funds to build municipal grant programs within the communities. In addition to that, the provisional Act identified \$20 million for grant funding through DCEO, for assistance with infrastructure to support job creation. With investment tax credits, a bank can loan money to a project within the zone and write-off the tax on the interest earned on those loans.

The River Edge Redevelopment Zones are the future of enterprise zones. The Act spawned more than \$30 million in investments and created more than 200 million jobs.

Worthen asked how much it cost. Associate Director Dowd responded that IEPA's appropriation is \$5 million.

Mud to Parks – John Marlin, Illinois Sustainable Technology Center

The capital budget contains \$8 million for the Mud to Parks sediment reuse program. Half of the funds are available this year. Sediment will be obtained from areas where it has been tested and characterized. Sites that have worked with the Mud to Parks effort in the past and have projects that can be initiated relatively soon are most likely to be selected for initial work. Projects will provide topsoil to areas such as landfills, old industrial sites, strip mines and other sites in need of topsoil or in some cases soil for construction.

Locations likely to receive sediment initially include Morris and Pekin Landfills, Decatur and East Peoria municipalities and State Fish and Wildlife Areas including Rice Lake, Banner Marsh, Woodford County, Marshall County, Sanganois and North Point Marina. Start dates for projects depend on release of funds.

The Chicago Park District would like more topsoil from the Illinois River for use on old industrial sites that are being converted to parks. The original Mud to Parks project at the old US Steel site was successful. The movement of additional sediment has been delayed while the relationship between navigation locks and the spread of the Asian carp are considered. Sediment could also provide soil for other projects near the river including a barrier berm between the Des Plaines River and the canal.

Osman asked if there are regional stockpiles for developers. Marlin responded that USACE has a mini program near Peoria where dredged material is available to public. Andres added that a project with USACE uses dredged material from the Kaskaskia at an industrial park.

On Farm Network – Dr. Tracy Blackmer, Iowa Soybean Association

For some time now, farmers, agri-businesses, university researchers and environmentalists have been working to improve nitrogen (N) fertilizer management. For growers, the penalty of mismanagement can be the difference of making a profit or not. These penalties result from the extremes of either spending too much and applying excess fertilizer or applying too little and losing yield. There are a number of environmental concerns, since over-fertilization can lead to excessive N losses into air and water.

If too little N is used over large geographic regions, production could decrease enough to spark food price increases. If regulations required growers to apply less N than needed for optimal yield, it would force an increase in corn acres as farmers try to meet demand, putting "marginal" land into production.

This could cause increased soil erosion and even more N losses. Optimizing N management in corn is economically and environmentally sound. The challenge growers face is determining the most efficient management practices and application rates. Predicting the correct N rate is difficult and affected by many factors including the N form, weather, soil temperatures, application method and timing.

The amount of N needed to produce a crop is much greater than that of any other nutrient. The nitrate form of N, the primary form of N taken up by plants, is more likely to be lost by leaching or as a gas than other major nutrients. Much of the nitrate taken up by corn comes from bacterial transformation of soil organic matter and not from fertilizer. Historically, growers have calculated the amount of N fertilizer needed according to expected grain yield. Developing a tool to accurately predict the amount of N available during the growing season remains a challenge.

One of the best ways to improve N use efficiency is to evaluate N management at each field. The end-of-the-season stalk nitrate test can provide reliable feedback, showing whether too little, excess or optimal N was available. One of the best ways for growers to use the feedback from the stalk test is to compare stalk results with other growers and critically evaluate the results with consultants, researchers, UI Extension and USDA-NRCS personnel familiar with the test.

The stalk nitrate test results are more valuable when local growers compare their individual results to those of the group. This is adaptive N management. It assumes that optimal N rate cannot be predicted for any field during application because rainfall amounts after N application are not known. The best estimates for optimal N rate are based on the results from post-mortem tests like the stalk nitrate test, which provides feedback on the previous year.

Other Business

Dorothy asked citizen members to please complete their ethics training and explained the new travel voucher procedure.

2010 Meeting Information

Mississippi River Coordinating Council

3rd Quarter

September 8, 2010, 1:30 PM
Mariner's Village
1 Resort Dr
Carlyle, IL

4th Quarter

December 15, 2010, 1:30 PM
Randolph County Courthouse
1 Taylor Street
Chester IL

Wabash and Ohio Rivers Coordinating Council

3rd Quarter

July 1, 2010, 1:30 PM
Fort Massac State Park
1308 E. 5th Street
Metropolis, IL 62960

4th Quarter

November 11, 2010, 1:30 PM
Champaign Public Library, Robeson Pavilion Rm
A & B
200 W. Green St.
Champaign, IL 61820

Illinois River Coordinating Council

3rd Quarter

August 4, 2010, 1:30 PM

National Great Rivers Museum
Alton, IL

4th Quarter
October 28, 2010, 1:30PM

Chicago Botanic Garden, Nicholas Hall
Glencoe, IL

Director Miller announced that the Wabash and Ohio Rivers Coordinating Council still has an opening. Please apply at www.appointments.illinois.gov.

Bullard asked for a place that quantifies the specific CREP enrollments. King responded that the information is accessible from DNR's website dnr.state.il.us/orc/conservation_programs/crep/.

Public Comment Period

Kristian Gustavson, Below the Surface, is concerned about toxic disbursements that have been applied to the oil in the Gulf of Mexico cleanup effort.

Dick Ladzinski is concerned about erosion problems on land along the Illinois River in Northeastern Illinois.

Joyce Blumenshine, Heart of Illinois Group, Sierra Club, expressed concern about the \$13 million USACE rehabilitation project on Rice Lake/Banner Complex. Wildlife will be affected by the intensive levee work, tree cutting and other construction that will impact this area. Director Miller will provide update on the EMP project at Banner at the next IRCC meeting.

Christine Favilla, Sierra Club, commented that the Sierra Club is working with Ducks Unlimited to update the state's wetland database. Also, Nicollet Island Coalition released a report analyzing ongoing navigation lock and dam expansion projects. Ecosystem restoration is necessary and the current EMP program is working well. Ecosystem projects need to be removed from NESP and rolled into EMP.

Blake Roderick, Pike County Farm Bureau, commented that the General Assembly passed a resolution to support the Comprehensive Plan and ask the federal government to fund and authorize it. Iowa and Missouri have done the same. Congressman Hare has presented several petitions to Representative Oberstar.

4:00 Adjournment

Andres motioned to adjourn. Worthen seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:55 PM.